AGENCY NOTICE ON CMS REQUIREMENTS

All HUD Housing Counseling Agencies:

All agencies participating in the HUD Housing Counseling Program should have a HUD compliant Client Management System (CMS) no later than the end of Fiscal Year 2011. This application must be used when recording client intake information during every counseling and workshop sessions. This requirement has been in existence since 2008. CMS must be HUD compliant to allow electronic (automated) transmission of required data and reports into the HUD Housing Counseling System (HCS). During Fiscal Year 2012 starting October 1st, 2011, all agencies must submit their information using their CMS. This will naturally reduce or eliminate the need to manually enter data directly into HCS.

All agencies should ensure that their CMS is compatible with the latest HUD standard. The latest standard is ARM 4.0. CMS using ARM 3.1 will be accepted for a short time while they are in the process of converting to the higher ARM 4.0 standard. Any CMS still using ARM 3.0 will not be accepted in FY12.

Agencies will input all HCS required data that includes their agency profile, client and counselor data into their CMS. Their quarterly 9902 performance reports will also be created in their CMS. Agencies should refer to the data reference guide in the HCS CMS web site (see link below) to better understand the data HUD requires to report. All data listed must be reported when available. These data elements are useful to HUD to better analyze the Housing Counseling Program and to find better ways for making improvements. Counselor data will be used to establish a training and certification program in HCS. Client data will be used to create 9902 reports and to analyze types of clients receiving the various services. Personal Counselor and Client data reported to HUD via HCS is not shared within HUD, or with any other third party for privacy protection.

Agencies are still required to login directly into HCS at least every 90 days (quarterly) to check their data and to mark the Validation box in their agency profile. Agencies can check the quality and completeness of their CMS transmission by logging in HCS after each transmission to review the data posted in their agency profile. Any incorrect or missing data should be corrected in their CMS and re-transmitted. Agencies should not make corrections directly in HCS as the error will be repeated when the agency retransmits at a later time.

Agency should work with their HUD assigned contact if their CMS fails and they need to input required timely data/reports directly in HCS. Agencies should work with their CMS Help Contact if they experience any issues using their CMS application. HUD does not have technical insight to any CMS and should not be contacted concerning CMS issues.

Agencies are required to use their HCS User ID and password in their CMS just like they use when accessing HCS directly. This will allow the CMS to securely connect with HCS before transferring data. Remember to CAPITALIZE the MX portion of their ID; (example, MX1234). Password for their CMS must be between 6 to 8 characters in length with one CAPITAL letter and a combination of letters and numbers; (Example, PassWd2).

It is the responsibility of each Agency to ensure their data in HCS is current and complete at all times. It is also the responsibility of each Agency to use a HUD approved and compliant CMS that is ready to transmit their data by the start of FY12.

Agencies should refer to the HUD CMS web site for guidance and assistance in selecting and utilizing their CMS. The web site is:

http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program offices/housing/sfh/hcc/cms

This message has gone out to the email addresses provided by all active Counseling agencies in HUD's Housing Counseling Program. Nevertheless, all Parent Agencies should make sure their sub-agencies have received this information. Please direct questions or comments to your respective HUD point of contact or email Housing.Counseling@hud.gov by directly responding to this email addresses.

Sincerely,

Ruth Román

Director, Program Support Division

Office of Single Family Housing

Department of Housing and Urban Development